LABOUR MONTHLY

A Magazine of International Labour

Editor: R. Palme Dutt

The New Labour Programme

R.P.D.

Sir Lincoln Evans and All That

WAL HANNINGTON

Open Letter to My M.P.

A. CONDRON (Royal Marines)

July, 1953

One shilling and sixpence

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INSISTENT VOICES

THREE years ago this month when the war was launched on Korea, *Labour Monthly* readers had before them the famous last article by Agnes Smedley, writing just before her death in March, 1950. This was her warning: 'A dreadful war plot is being hatched in the Far East. . . . Yet the secret forces behind this plot are not yet known to the people of the world, certainly not to the peoples of Japan, America, Britain, and the peoples of some of the countries of Europe. To expose and protest, and finally to appeal to the people of America in particular, is the role of every peaceable man of the Western world. But it must be done soon, otherwise the plot will reach its fulfilment in a new world war, beginning in the Far East'. What tremendous events have taken place in three short years—how many hundreds of thousands of innocent lives have been lost, what wreckage and devastation unleashed before the lesson could be learnt and the 'dreadful war plot' clearly realised. Month after month, *Labour Monthly* explained in articles and pamphlets the truth about this hideous war. One of these issues was soon to come into the hands of a Scottish Royal Marine, who was captured a month before Christmas, 1950. What it meant to him he tells on page 324. It is also the story of a crumpled ten shillings note, almost falling to pieces, which we have just received. It was a wrench to us to bank it, instead of framing it and putting it among our special treasures. How powerful is truth, and how far its quiet insistent voice can carry!

Here we feel a special warmth for those readers and friends who are in the forces and far from home. We want them back from Korea, from Malaya, from the Middle East, from Kenya and the whole dark continent of Africa; we want them back home, playing their part in the Labour movement and building peace and socialism in Britain. I am thinking, for example, of a sergeant in West Africa; of a National Serviceman in the Canal Zone, who writes to say how much he appreciated the May Notes of the Month, with its description of the effects of 'rumours of peace on the world stockmarkets—particularly convincing and useful. Being on the spot where there are incidents and troubles means that we know less of what happens just down the road than of events, say, in Europe. But there is no doubt that opinion out here is pretty unanimous'. From a quieter spot a reader in the R.A.F. writes that in some ways he is 'glad of the opportunity to come out here, as I understand the problem of southern Africa much better. What a tremendous job lies ahead when we shall have to rewrite our history books and reassess the main characters! I absolutely look forward to getting *L.M.* I read the Notes of the Month in conjunction with other papers I get from home, and find it helps me to develop my critical faculties. I realise the great importance of keeping in touch with what is going on in the world. It is quite a shock to arrive in these parts and find that they have no public libraries as we know them at home. The settlers are on the make and don't want to be out of pocket for anything so 'useless' as a free library. And you can imagine that the situation is even worse for the Africans'.

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Notes of the Month

The New Labour Programme

'The draft directives for the Fifth Five Year Plan provide for an increase in the national income of the U.S.S.R. over the five year period of not less than 60 per cent., an increase in the real wages of industrial and office workers of not less than 35 per cent., and an increase in the income of the collective farmers of not less than 40 per cent.'

G. M. MALENKOV, Report to the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, October, 1952.

'The Plan for Britain which we outline in the following pages will involve sacrifices not only of material benefits but of many cherished habits and traditions. We are convinced the British people will accept these sacrifices.'

CHALLENGE TO BRITAIN, Labour Party Executive Draft Programme, June, 1953.

WITH the publication of 'Challenge to Britain', the new Draft Programme of the Labour Party Executive for submission to the Margate Labour Party Conference in October, the battle for the future of Labour policy and for the whole future of the Labour Party has opened, and will be waged with increasing intensity between now and October. This battle is in the forefront of the present political situation in Britain. Britain stands

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before the most critical choice of paths in the present world situation. One path is the path of peace and national independence, of the reduction of armaments and military burdens, of extending trade and friendship with the socialist world, of rising living standards and the advance to socialism. The other is the path of the American war alliance, of crippling rearmament, of colonial wars, of trade bans, and of consequent disastrous economic deterioration, lowering of living standards and retreat from the aims of socialism. The former is the path demanded by the Labour and trade union membership. This was abundantly shown at the Morecambe Labour Party Conference last October. It has been still further shown at the wide series of trade union and co-operative conferences during these recent months. But the latter is the path to which the main body of the right wing leadership dominating the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress General Council still cling. Ever since Morecambe they have sought in every way to reverse its decisions and to combat the rising left wing trends. The single exception of Mr. Attlee's speech of May 12, made in response to the lead of Sir Winston Churchill on May 11, has found no reflection yet in the propaganda and directives of Transport House. The new Draft Programme is in its essential character and outlines an expression of the right wing policy. It is a repudiation, sometimes open and glaring, sometimes thinly camouflaged, of the main resolutions and decisions emanating from the rank and file which were accepted at Morecambe. The new Draft Programme has been entitled 'Challenge to Britain'. It should be more correctly entitled 'Challenge to Labour' or 'Challenge to the Rank and File' or 'Challenge to Socialism'.

Cart Before Horse

The essential character of 'Challenge to Britain' is that it divorces Britain's internal situation from foreign policy. Britain's home problems are dealt with in the present document. Foreign policy is relegated to a future document. In place of starting from a policy for peace, as the indispensable key to tackling Britain's home problems, the real relation is reversed. Britain's chronic crisis, trading deficits, dollar deficits and dependence, and shortage of resources for development, are presented as an absolute inevitable fact of nature ('face the harsh facts of life'), requiring in consequence austerity, multiplied exertions, 'sacrifices of material benefits', postponement of social advance. But the war policy which gives rise

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to these consequences is ignored for the purposes of this document. Foreign policy is neatly pigeon-holed away for a separate document to be issued a month later. We are informed by Mr. Morgan Phillips that the present programme, which ignores all the burning controversial questions of the war policy, the American military alliance, the colossal rearmament programme or colonial wars, 'covers every aspect of national affairs from the dollar problem to local government', while 'in July a complete restatement of the Party's foreign policy will be circulated'. Thus the entire framework of the Atlantic war policy, the cold war, the crippling rearmament programme, the trade bans, the overseas military burdens and all the rest of it, is coolly taken for granted in this programme as the assumed inevitable framework of a policy for Britain. On the basis of this assumed framework the grim perspective is presented to 'face the harsh facts of life', accept 'inevitable sacrifices' and 'call on the British people to postpone an improvement of their living standards.' Was there ever a more barefaced shuffling of the cards? Or rather, the presentation of the marked card in order to ensure the fore-ordained result in the interests of capitalism and imperialism.

Born Dead

Last month, in anticipation of the draft programme, we wrote:

> The practicability of a positive progressive policy at home is entirely dependent on a policy for peace, national independence, the reduction of strangling military commitments and overseas military adventures, and the extension of trade with the economically advancing non-dollar world. Plenty of speculations and controversies have already appeared on the contents of the draft programme. One thing can be said with certainty in advance. The draft programme will be born dead if it fails to present in the forefront a positive and concrete policy for peace, for the national independence of Britain from American domination, for the reduction of military commitments, and the extension of East-West trade, as the indispensable basis for economic and social advance at home. If it fails to do this, its home programme can only present a grim and gloomy prospect of tightened belts, sacrificed social advances, and economic suicide masquerading in the guise of 'economic realism'.

This is exactly what has happened with the present draft programme. But there are still three and a half months between now and October to compel the removal of this abortion and its replacement by a programme which corresponds to the demands and interests of the working people and of all supporters of peace and socialism.

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Portents in Europe

Can any intelligent observer fail to see that the entire political situation in Europe, in France, in Italy, in Germany, in every country shackled to the American war bloc, is dominated by the mounting mass desire for peace, for escape from the bonds of the American war policy, for response to the peace overtures of the Soviet and Chinese Governments, for the reduction of armaments, and for economic advance upon the basis of such a radical change of policy? This is the governing choice of the present situation. By this test every programme stands or falls. The French ministerial crisis, with the strength of the response to the programme of Mendès-France, has underlined this central question. The Italian elections, with the discomfiture of De Gasperi and surging advance of the communist and socialist vote, have powerfully demonstrated the feelings of the people. In Western Germany Adenauer is reduced to the hysterical frenzy of a Syngman Rhee; and indeed the Social Democratic Party of Western Germany in its latest publication has bracketed 'Konrad Adenauer and Syngman Rhee' as 'miserable creatures of the cold war'. The United States Embassies understand well enough what is happening:

> State Department officials have been watching recent parliamentary developments in France and Italy with mounting disquiet. . . . The political complexion of Europe is becoming increasingly unfavourable to the policy and interests of the United States. . . .
>
> The rearmament of Germany through E.D.C. is the key to American policy in Europe, and the difficulty of continuing to pursue a European policy, the key to which is drawn further and further from the American grasp, is causing a not unnatural exasperation. Officials await the elections in West Germany late this summer in the hope that the growth of opposition to American policies evident elsewhere is not confirmed in the Federal Republic. But it would be a travesty to describe them as optimistic. (*The Times*, June 12, 1953).

Sir Winston Churchill with his customary shrewdness has caught the trend, hastened to capture the political initiative to ride the rising wave, and (if the usual mixture of metaphors may be forgiven) reaped his first fruits at Sunderland. Only the Bourbons of Transport House remain blind and unaware, leaving the political initiative to Toryism.

France in Ferment

Consider the significance of the French ministerial crisis. The prolonged delay in the formation of a Government, the successive defeats of aspirant Prime Ministers, or the short life of successive

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Ministries, arouse homeric laughter or satirical condescension in political quarters in Britain, where the conception of a parliament controlling the government in place of the government controlling parliament is regarded as a fantastic failure to understand the essence of parliamentarism. The assumption of ruling from the top downwards, with effective machinery to close every vent of democratic control from below, and an iron-clad two party system to make parliament the rubber stamp of the will of the executive, is so implicit in the entire constitutional structure in Britain that any suggestion of introducing a democratic element arouses horror. From this standpoint the spectacle of elected representatives of the people (even by a dubious electoral system though far less blatantly undemocratic than the British electoral system) assuming themselves to be sovereign and actually displacing and replacing governments, is regarded in all orthodox British quarters as an indecency verging on anarchy.

Whither France?

But the ministerial crisis in France is only the symptom of the battle of basic policy which is developing and forcing itself to the forefront. The ministerial crisis is only the symptom of the deepening crisis and bankruptcy of the whole existing economic-social-military structure, based on dollar subsidies and American control, crippling rearmament and overseas colonial warfare, capitulation to Nazi rearmament, and impoverishment of the home population. After the completion of the Marshall 'Recovery' Plan France is faced with economic bankruptcy.

> As former Prime Minister Edgar Faure has recently written, and as financial experts of the O.E.E.C. have long since acknowledged, France is in fact living off its deficit in its balance of payments and the consequent Treasury resources of the counterpart of American aid. 'We depend on foreign aid for our daily life', M. Faure writes: 'a cut-back, a decrease or a delay can signify the asphyxiation of our economy and on the financial plane a calamitous crisis to our Treasury.'
>
> Presumably the Americans will not permit such a crisis, and in return France will continue to try to fulfil what M. Bidault loves to call its 'world vocation'—a vocation, as Mendès-France and Edgar Faure have brilliantly demonstrated, which has the odd effect of reducing France to a completely satellite status. (*Observer*, June 7, 1953.)

The programme presented by M. Mendès-France represented the first attempt on top levels to break that satellite status, resume national independence, end the war in Indo-China on the basis of negotiations with Ho Chi Minh, reduce military commitments and

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expenditure, postpone ratification of E.D.C. (Nazi rearmament), and support the moves for peace and negotiations with the Soviet Union. This programme, which aroused panic alarm in American official quarters that France might be about to escape from the net, came within 13 votes of winning a majority; and the real support for its proposals was so great that less than one fifth of the deputies (119 of 620 voting) voted against it, the remainder abstaining. Such a defeat was, as one reporter noted, 'a delayed-action victory'—a portent of the future. For it should be remembered that the French Communist Party, the principal representative of national independence, peace and the interests of the French people, registered a dramatic advance on its already premier position at the municipal elections in April, and would be likely to carry this further forward at a general election.

Italian Elections

Even more significant is the outcome of the Italian general election in June. Despite manipulation of the electoral law (in accordance with the now customary Western 'democratic' practice, whenever the popular forces advance, to change the electoral law every time, with the openly avowed aim of securing the result desired by the Government), the American-sponsored Government coalition of De Gasperi secured only a minority of the votes and hence failed to obtain the weighted majority of seats planned by the new law. In the face of open intervention and threats by the American Ambassador, as well as all the pressure of the Vatican, the Italian masses raised the votes of the allied Communist and Socialist Parties and their democratic allies to over ten millions, or an advance of one and three quarter millions on the last election, whose result had already been a blow in the face to American policy. Has all this no lesson for the Labour Party? What was the programme which thus rallied the enthusiasm of the Italian working people and made possible such a dramatic electoral advance? It was the programme of peace and national independence, to free Italy from the chains of the Atlantic war alliance and to raise the living standards of the people. What was the strategy which made possible the parallel advance of the Communist and Socialist Parties, with over six million communist votes and three and a half million socialist votes? It was the strategy of the united front, of co-operation in place of internecine strife and disruption. What was the fate of the disruptionists, the Saragat splinter of so-called 'Democratic-Socialists', so zealously fostered by Transport House and Morgan Phillips,

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equipped with lavish American finance and sheltering under the wing of clerical reaction as its docile coalition satellite? They were spewed out by the working class, suffered heavy decline, and barely received one eighth of the votes won by the Communist and Socialist alliance. Has all this no lesson for the Labour Party to indicate the necessary programme and strategy of victory for the working class and its allies?

Lesson of Sunderland

Nearer home the portent of the Sunderland by-election has taught the same lesson in reverse. A Tory Government, after a year and a half of office, after slashing food subsidies and raising the cost of living, after raising the Bank Rate and lining the pockets of the rich, after bringing down the level of real wages and increasing unemployment, actually gains a seat (not holds a seat, *gains* a seat) from the Labour Opposition. What is the explanation for this electoral prodigy, which has not been paralleled for a quarter of a century? There is no doubt of the answer in the view of every political observer and commentator. It was Sir Winston Churchill's peace initiative on May 11 which swung the Sunderland election on May 13. It is true that Mr. Attlee also spoke on May 12, twenty-four hours after Churchill, supporting Churchill's peace initiative and even carrying it further in a number of respects. But that was twenty-four hours too late. It was discounted and repudiated by the whole preceding official Labour propaganda—up to and including Noel-Baker immediately after Churchill on May 11, who on behalf of the Labour Front Bench warned against the 'risks' inherent in Churchill's proposal for a meeting of the Powers on the highest level, and insisted that 'we must go on increasing our military strength in N.A.T.O.' It was contradicted by all the preceding anti-Soviet calumnies, servile adulation of American imperialism, denunciations of every move for peace and banning and expulsion of supporters of peace. Thereby the initiative for peace was handed to Churchill, to Toryism. The result was Sunderland.

None So Blind

Have they learned the lesson? On the contrary. The pundits of Transport House would rather die than admit that policy had anything to do with the Sunderland result. Mr. Morgan Phillips came out with a brilliant 'explanation' of Sunderland:

'The simple fact is that Labour supporters did not vote.'

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O wisdom of Solomon! Why did the Labour majority in Sunderland fail to vote for the Labour candidate? Because they did not vote for him. But why did they not vote? There the questioning is brought hastily to an end and buried in a thicket of remarks about 'weakness of organisation', 'lack of election workers', 'apathy', etc.—anything except the plain fact of the absence of a programme and policy capable of arousing the enthusiasm of the Labour supporters, bringing out the election workers, dispelling 'apathy' and abstentionism, and winning the majority of the electors. The Die-Hards of Right Wing Labour surrendered the peace initiative to Churchill. Thereby they surrendered Sunderland to Toryism. And thereby also, along the present line, they would surrender the general election to Toryism—unless the membership intervenes in time to compel a change.

A Bankrupt Programme

More than any other, this country needs a basic revision of policy directed toward peace and national independence, cutting down of crippling military burdens (heavier in Britain in proportion to population and resources than in any major country in the world), ending of extravagant overseas military adventures and colonial wars, release from the American stranglehold, and extension of non-dollar trade. For in Britain the crippling burdens of the existing war policy come on top of the already profound weakening and crisis of the whole imperialist system which has developed since the first world war, and accentuate that crisis. Hence any realist programme for tackling Britain's economic problems must begin from the urgent necessity to reverse the existing war policy of the American alliance, super-rearmament and the cold war, in order to tackle the tasks of economic and social reconstruction at home. But this is precisely what the draft programme fails to do. Hence even as a home programme it is bankrupt.

From Myth to Misery

The essential failure and impotence of the draft programme to solve Britain's problems does not lie merely in the detail character of the specific proposals, and the glaring retreat from the spirit and demands of Morecambe. The essential bankruptcy arises from the basic premiss on which it is built. It is built on a false foundation, and from the false foundation the rest follows. That false founda-

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tion is the concealed assumption, which is never openly stated, of the inevitable framework of the American war alliance, the cold war, the rearmament programme, the trade bans and overseas military expenditure. On the basis of that concealed assumption the authors of the draft programme proclaim with clamorous emphasis that Britain is not paying its way as a trading nation, is not exporting enough to pay for its imports, is in the grip of a chronic dollar deficit and dollar dependence, and that these are the 'harsh facts' which must be faced. From this analysis they draw the conclusion that the only solution is to increase production, keep down consumption, impose 'sacrifices' on the population both of Britain and of the colonial countries, export more, fight to expand dollar markets, earn more dollars, and all the rest of the usual rigmarole, and that all policy must be directed to this supreme objective. It will be seen that this analysis and this solution follow slavishly the current lines of capitalist propaganda and capitalist policy, even though they throw in a plentiful admixture of state controls and state boards to sugar the pill with an appearance of a 'socialist' coating. But the most important decisive immediate factors in Britain's present economic situation, arising from the war policy, are left out of the picture. They begin with a false diagnosis. They end with a false solution. They begin with a Myth. They end with Misery.

Who are the Realists?

It is the proud boast of the authors of the draft programme that they 'face the harsh facts'. This claim has been repeated a hundredfold by the Morrisons and Phillips, with eulogies of their own 'realism' and warning against utopian wishful-thinking of the left. But this is precisely what they fail to do. As long ago as November, 1945, the Communist Party explicitly warned that the imperialist foreign policy would wreck the plans of social advance at home and land Britain in deepening economic difficulties. Did the Morrisons and Phillips take heed of the warning whose realism has been proved? On the contrary; that was the period of the Daltonian honeymoon, with a song in their heart and Morrison's bland assurances in 1946 that planning had conquered crisis and that 1947 would see the reward of their sacrifices and a vast increase of imports. When the crisis burst on them in 1947, they rushed for refuge into the American dollar-baited trap of the Marshall Plan. Once again the Communist Party warned with correct realism that

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this would bring no recovery but deepened crisis, dollar dependence and extending American penetration and domination. For this warning, whose correct realism has been proved by the present situation and is now universally admitted, the Communists were dubbed enemies of recovery. And now the draft programme dolefully laments that 'there is still no end to dollar shortage in sight' and that we must struggle and sacrifice to 'regain our economic independence'.

A Spurious Alibi

As conditions of crisis became chronic, and blighted the early mayfly illusions of the right wing, Ministers explained that the causes lay in post-war unsettlement and the losses of the second world war. The Communists laid bare the deeper causes in the crisis of the imperialist system, manifesting itself in a deficit on the balance of payments already before the second world war, and showed how the disastrous imperialist policy of the American alliance, heavy rearmament, colonial wars and trade bans was intensifying this crisis. Hence the necessity to reverse this policy as the first step to basic economic and social reconstruction at home in the direction of socialism. This was the theme of the Communist long-term programme, *The British Road to Socialism*. Now the new draft programme of the Labour Party Executive announces that 'British capitalism long ago entered its decline', and endeavours to make this presentation of the long-term factors of the general crisis of capitalism and British capitalism an *alibi* for failing to tackle the immediate decisive disastrous policies of the rearmament programme, cold war and overseas military expenditure.

Gambler's Road to Ruin

The result is a highly fictionalised presentation of Britain's economic problem. The usual innocent picture is presented of 'fifty million people, crowded on these islands' struggling to 'earn a decent living'. Imperialism is invisible in this picture. The balance of payments problem is presented in terms of importing and exporting goods:

> We import over half the food we eat, and with few exceptions—of which coal is much the most important—all our raw materials. To pay for these essential imports we rely on selling our exports.

And the conventional solution follows:

> We shall therefore have to export more and more in the years ahead. . . . To avoid a crisis we must push up the exports which earn us dollars or gold.

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One little casual reference to 'overseas military commitments' (no indication how much) is *smuggled in*—there is no other term for it —in the middle of a paragraph cataloguing release of gold and dollars to other members of the sterling area, contributions to U.N.R.R.A. etc. No one would guess from this picture that over the entire seven years since the war, from 1946 to 1952 inclusive, the net deficit on the balance of payments has been £821 million and the total officially recorded overseas military expenditure has been £1,159 million. In other words, on the basis of these figures, if there had been no overseas military expenditure, there would have been no deficit on the balance of payments. Certainly the document expresses the pious hope that 'whenever the opportunity offers we must work to end the cold war and halt the rearmament race' and proceeds to cancel it with the addition that 'so long as there is a threat of aggression Britain must share with her allies the burden of military defence' ('defence' in Malaya? in Kenya?). But this crucial immediate factor in Britain's deepening bankruptcy is ignored when it comes to defining policy. This is much like the gambler who announces in solemn tones to his family that 'we are not paying our way and are faced with ruin', and accordingly exhorts his already hard pressed wife to 'face the harsh facts of life' and save the pennies on matches and the children's clothes, but assumes the continuance of thousands of pounds going down the drain for his gambling.

East-West Trade

Take the crucial question of extending trade with the non-dollar area of the world, and especially with the economically advancing socialist third of the world, and thus diminishing dollar dependence. The draft programme sets the nominal aim to overcome dollar dependence and end the chronic dollar deficit. But the policy it proposes for this purpose is to direct every effort of British production and trade to the supreme objective to force up dollar exports, i.e. to intensify the competition with Western Germany, Japan and the other industrial exporting countries of the American bloc in the desperate hope to expand enormously the exports of manufactured goods to America which already produces more than it needs and does not want them. This is the economics of Bedlam. Meanwhile the enormously expanding economies of the countries of socialism and people's democracy, not subject to depression or slumps, offer limitless possibilities for rapid expansion of complementary trade of mutual advantage—and every such development

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limits dollar dependence. But these are closed by American-imposed trade restrictions and the Battle Act. Trade with China has been cut to one-tenth the pre-war level. Exports to Eastern Europe, taken as a proportion of total exports, had been cut already by 1951 to less than one-seventh the level of 1938. Yet in fact pre-war is no measure of the present possibilities, in view of the huge economic development which has since taken place in these countries. The European Economic Commission of the United Nations has repeatedly shown how the expansion of East-West trade could end dollar dependence. A serious programme for overcoming dollar dependence would therefore place in the forefront the ending and repudiation of these American-imposed restrictions on East-West trade. But this is precisely what the draft programme, despite all its loud talk about combatting dollar dependence, fails to do.

Flouting Morecambe

The Morecambe Labour Party Conference understood the importance of this question very clearly when it unanimously adopted a resolution calling for 'the promotion and expansion of East-West trade'. A further resolution, moved by the Electrical Trades Union, was carried, which urged the Executive Committee 'to use all the means at their disposal to pursue a policy of developing trading relations with all countries' (i.e. as a present policy, in face of the trade restrictions, not as a pious aspiration for the future). Lest there should be any doubt of the significance of this demand, the mover of the resolution made it clear:

> The Electrical Trades Union views with alarm the effect of the Battle Act passed by the American Congress and supported by this Government. . . . The question of this country being able to maintain and improve living standards is linked with our being able to promote world trade and end the present restrictions.

Thus the demand was specifically to 'end the present restrictions' imposed by American policy in the name of the cold war. To make assurance doubly sure, a further unanimous resolution called for

> the fostering of international trade on a basis free from restrictions imposed by political differences.

The unqualified repudiation here of the existing restrictions imposed in the name of the cold war is explicit. Thus there is no question of the mandatory instruction of the Morecambe Conference. The same demand has been expressed by trade union conference after conference. And now observe what has happened to this demand in the dexterous hands of the Executive Committee. The draft

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programme declares, under the heading 'Cold War', not in the section dealing with trading policy:

> Labour will endeavour to maintain and expand East-West trade within the limits imposed by the Cold War.

A pretty subterfuge. 'To maintain and expand East-West trade'. Fine. But then comes the joker. *'Within the limits imposed by the Cold War'*—i.e. within the limits imposed by American policy and the Battle Act which strangle any expansion of East-West trade. But these are precisely the limits against which the whole labour and trade union movement is in revolt. There could be no more characteristic example of the right wing endeavour to turn the decisions of Morecambe upside down.

Retreat from Nationalisation

Similarly on nationalisation. The Morecambe Conference demanded 'further nationalisation' and specifically 'instructed' the Executive Committee to 'draw up a list of the key and major industries to be taken into public ownership during the five-year programme'. Not much room for ambiguity here. But the right wing leadership from the outset was at war with this demand, even while nominally 'accepting' it at Morecambe (as was already indicated by Morrison's speech at Morecambe, after he had been defeated for the Executive Committee). During the ensuing eight months they have conducted a continuous fire against it. Thus in his broadcast in April of this year Mr. Morrison coolly proclaimed the anti-Morecambe view to be 'the Labour Party view':

> No doubt there have been people in the Labour movement who saw nationalisation as a cure for all evils—people whose motto appears to be 'Here's a problem—so nationalise it'. But that has never been the Labour Party view.

The draft programme follows this prescription. Apart from the re-nationalisation of steel and road haulage, and the nationalisation of water, the new model is proclaimed to 'build and operate new enterprises or acquire a controlling interest in existing enterprises', 'where necessary, take particular sections of the engineering industry into public ownership', 'acquire a number of the key machine tool firms', 'acquire for the State a controlling interest in a few firms', 'take powers to acquire any firm which falls down on its job', etc. This carries forward the conception of the so-called 'mixed economy' of the partnership of the State and profit-making capitalism (actually utilisation of the State in the economic field in the service of the monopolies) to a new extreme. It is a complete

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repudiation of the demand for nationalisation expressed in the traditional propaganda of the labour movement for over half a century, envisaging nationalisation as a weapon against capitalism and for the displacement of capitalism.

Offensive on the People

The essential identity of the economic programme of 'Challenge to Britain' with the current economic programme of monopoly capitalism is scarcely even veiled under the window-dressing of a proliferation of State Boards or proposals for the State to invest in capitalist enterprise. So far from the latter proposal being a brilliant 'new socialist' idea of the Fabian 'New Thinkers', its hoary antiquity and ultra-respectable conservative pedigree goes back to Disraeli acquiring shares for the State in the Suez Canal Company or Churchill in Anglo-Persian Oil. But the essential economic programme of the monopoly capitalists today is to attack the living standards of the people as the only way to tackle the crisis in accordance with their interests, in order to fulfil the herculean task of combining extended export of capital and expansion of dollar exports with a colossal military programme. 'We are living on an economic knife-edge', proclaimed Mr. Morrison in his April broadcast. 'Britain's economy sways on a knife-edge', proclaimed *The Times* post-Coronation editorial. Two minds with but a single thought. And the conclusion in each case is strikingly similar. The amply salaried editorialist of *The Times,* after having spent the previous days beslavering with servile adulation the fancy dress antics of the parasites drawing tens of thousands a year for doing nothing, awakens with a hangover the next morning (entitled 'And After?') to lecture sternly the common working population (two millions on the Means Test) for their habits of luxury and idleness. 'Present ease is being subsidised by future penury.' 'A plain disinclination for hard work.' 'Refusing the irksomeness of saving', etc. Mr. Morrison puts the same thought in more popular language. He tells the working people to stop saying 'What do I get out of it?' and learn to say instead 'What can I give?'

Sacrifices—For What?

So 'sacrifices', 'sacrifices', 'sacrifices' becomes the theme song of 'Challenge to Britain', repeated on nearly every page. 'Sacrifices of material benefits.' 'Inevitable sacrifices.' 'Accept these sacrifices.' 'Sacrifice and endurance.' 'Postpone an improvement of living standards.' This is the polite or 'spiritual' expression for the

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capitalist offensive on living standards. For much more is involved than to 'postpone an improvement in living standards'. Lord Beveridge has pointed out that the whole conception of social security envisaged in his Report has been invalidated by the fall in the value of benefits owing to the rise in the cost of living. The draft programme proposes that any *future* rise in the cost of living should be made good in the scale of benefits—thus accepting the existing fall of one third in their real value since they were instituted. The demand for an enormous increase of production by the workers (in order to cover increased exports, increased investment of capital and increased export of capital alongside the colossal rearmament programme and overseas military expenditure), *without* any increase in the real wages of the workers ('postpone an improvement of living standards') is obviously equivalent to the demand that the entire benefit of increased output shall go to the capitalists and the war policies of imperialism, and that the workers shall receive a *diminished* share of total output. Cripps demanded a wage-freeze on the grounds that any improvement of wages and conditions should be dependent on an increase of output. Cripp's policy was finally booted out by the trade union movement. But Cripps was a philanthropist compared to the authors of the new draft programme. Cripps never dared to demand that any increase in output should be followed by a diminished share for the workers. This culmination has been left for the modern heroes of right wing labour policy.

The Contrast of Socialism

It is impossible not to contrast this Five Year Plan of Labour Reformism and the Five Year Plan of Socialism, adopted by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union at the Nineteenth Congress last October to reach fulfilment by 1955. The Five Year Plan of Labour Reformism sets the aim to 'postpone an improvement of living standards'. The Five Year Plan of Socialism is accomplishing the aim of raising all living standards by over one third, real wages and salaries by 35 per cent. and the income of collective farmers by 40 per cent. On Health the Plan of Socialism makes concrete provision for the vast extension of hospitals and centres to increase the number of hospital beds by 20 per cent. and of doctors by 25 per cent. within the five years. The Plan of Labour Reformism complains dolefully of 'under-staffed and over-full hospitals' and 'long waiting lists for beds' and the need for 'new hospital building', but makes no concrete proposals; while in respect of health centres

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'available resources at present permit the establishment of very few'. On Housing the Plan of Socialism sets the concrete objective to double the house-building programme. The Plan of Labour Reformism offers no increase in the housing programme ('Labour will *continue* with a large programme of new house building'). And so in every sphere. But the contrast is not of course the contrast between Socialism and Social Reform. It is the contrast between Socialism and Capitalism.

'Reform it Altogether'

The membership of the Labour Party and the trade unions have still to say their word on the new draft programme. The so-called 'Challenge to Britain' is in truth a challenge to them. On them will rest the responsibility to rally the fight for an alternative policy and programme which will really challenge the war policy and the interests of monopoly capitalism; and which will be capable of arousing the enthusiasm of all socialists and labour supporters and of the entire nation by putting forward a positive perspective for peace, national independence and rising standards on the path to socialism. Only such a programme can bring down Toryism and win a future general election. Only such a programme, and a new Government on the basis of such a programme, can begin to tackle and conquer Britain's chronic crisis and open a new and happier future. The battle of the amendments is due to begin. It is the vital interest of the entire labour movement (especially of the trade unions and of the divisional labour parties) that the challenge shall be taken up, and that the amendments shall pour in upon every aspect of this draft programme to express the true demands of the rank and file, and to carry forward the fight from Morecambe to Margate. For it is not merely a question of this or that particular aspect or proposition that needs to be amended. It is the whole basic underlying right wing policy which needs to be changed. And the would-be framer of amendments might well feel impelled to say of this draft programme, in the slightly revised words of Hamlet:

O, Amend it altogether!

June 16, 1953. **R.P.D.**

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SIR LINCOLN EVANS AND ALL THAT

WAL HANNINGTON

THE announcement that Sir Lincoln Evans, General Secretary of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation and leading member of the T.U.C. General Council, had accepted the post of Vice-Chairman of the Tory Government's de-nationalisation Steel Board, with a salary of £5,000 per year, created astonishment in the British trade union movement and awakened memories of the desertion to the Tory camp in 1931 of J. H. Thomas, then the General Secretary of the N.U.R. Simultaneous with the announcement of Sir Lincoln Evans' appointment, two other trade union leaders were named as accepting part-time positions with the Board at £20 per week, Mr. W. B. Beard, General Secretary, United Patternmakers Association, and Mr. James Owen, General Secretary, National Union of Blastfurnacemen.

The Executive Committee of Mr. Beard's Union expressed their opposition and he therefore withdrew, but Mr. Duncan Sandys, the Tory Minister of Supply, had other names on his list and he promptly announced that Mr. Beard's position would be taken by another member of the T.U.C. General Council, Mr. Andrew Naesmith, General Secretary, Amalgamated Weavers' Association. How many other trade union leaders there are on Mr. Sandys' list who would respond to his beckoning finger to 'cross the line' we do not know, but we do know that the majority of the T.U.C. General Council members have refrained from expressing public opposition to the action of the three who have accepted. In fact, Mr. Arthur Deakin, General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, with his usual impetuousness, has publicly defended Evans and endeavoured to justify his action.

These appointments cannot be viewed as a simple case of trade union leaders accepting Tory nomination to an industrial Board. Something much more fundamental is involved. The Board arises from the policy of the Tory Government to destroy the legislation by which the Labour Government nationalised the Steel industry. Having carried through Parliament this counter-measure to denationalise the industry they now set up this Board to facilitate the transference to private ownership and to aid and stabilise capitalist administration. Therefore, service on such a Board means nothing

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less than collaborating with the Tory Government to destroy the preceding work of the trade union and labour movement.

The attitude of the trade union movement to the de-nationalisation policy of the Tory Government was clearly expressed at the Trades Union Congress last September, and no member of the General Council could fail to understand that appointment to the Tory Steel Board meant a betrayal of the declared policy of the T.U.C. In the light of the present situation in which certain trade union officials are either publicly defending, or silently condoning, the acceptance of appointments to this Board, we would do well to study carefully the policy resolution on Nationalisation which was carried by an overwhelming majority at this same Congress, in spite of official opposition from the General Council. Here it is in full:

> This Congress notes the intention of the Tory Government to de-nationalise the Road Haulage and Iron and Steel Industries and declares its support of the Trade Unions directly concerned and the Labour Movement generally in their resistance to this reactionary anti-working-class procedure. It endorses the declared intention of the Labour Party to re-nationalise these industries.
>
> Congress re-affirms its faith in the principles of social ownership, but recognises that if their application remains restricted to a limited number of industries and services the full advantage of social ownership will be lost. It therefore welcomes the Labour Pary's declaration that it will extend social ownership.
>
> Congress therefore calls upon the General Council to formulate proposals for the extension of social ownership to other industries and services, particularly those now subject to monopoly control, such proposals to have due regard to the 'Plan for Engineering' of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions and other proposals submitted by affiliated organisations. Congress further calls upon the General Council to formulate general proposals for the democratisation of the nationalised industries and services calculated to make possible the ultimate realisation of full industrial democracy.
>
> These proposals shall be submitted to the 1953 Congress and, after endorsement, presented to the political wing of our Movement for inclusion in Labour's General Election programme.

It is indeed astounding that anyone should attempt to reconcile the action of Evans, Naesmith and Owen with the policy expressed in that resolution. But that is precisely what they are attempting to do when they suggest that appointment to this Steel Board is not against the policy of the trade union movement.

It is significant, however, that this resolution was carried by Congress against the expressed wishes of the General Council who put up one of its members to urge the delegates not to press the resolution to a vote, but to remit it to the General Council for

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'consideration'. This caused one of the most stormy scenes ever witnessed in Congress. The tortuous reasoning, evasive arguments, and the pleadings of Mr. C. J. Geddes speaking for the General Council, incensed the delegates, and when the Chairman, Mr. Arthur Deakin, casting aside all the established rules of debate, attempted to compel the delegates to vote on the suggestion of remitting the resolution to the General Council without a decisive vote, pandemonium broke out on the floor of the Congress, which caused him to take the vote properly, and the resolution was carried by a majority of 1,320,000 votes. One might indeed apply the old adage that 'coming events cast their shadows before them', for we are now witnessing part of the substance of the reactionary shadows which the T.U.C. General Council have been casting over the movement for the past five or six years.

It is not sufficient to criticise and condemn the individual actions of the three men in question. We must look deeper and condemn the policy which has brought those men—and others—to 'see no wrong' in accepting appointment to this Tory Steel Board. When the leadership of the trade union movement is allowed to pursue the reactionary role which the T.U.C. General Council has done for years, then collaboration with the Tory Steel Board is only a logical development.

At the Trades Union Congress in 1950 Lincoln Evans was largely responsible for defeating a resolution submitted by the Chemical Workers' Union which declared full support for the principle of nationalisation but urged more democratic control and administration in the existing nationalised industries. But in speaking against the resolution he was able to declare that he was doing so on behalf of the General Council! For many years his attitude has been clearly discernible, but the majority of the General Council did not hesitate to appoint him to the highly responsible position of Chairman of the T.U.C. Economic Committee, which post he continued to hold up to the moment of his new appointment with the Tories.

When Ted Hill, General Secretary of the Boilermakers' Union, caused a sensation at the national joint Productivity Conference by declaring that he would not urge his members to work harder unless he had assurances that they would derive benefits from increased production as well as the employers, he expressed the true rank and file trade union opinion on that subject. But at the subsequent meeting of the T.U.C. General Council it was Lincoln Evans who

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led the attack on Ted Hill demanding that he be dealt with for having made such a statement. The majority of the General Council were behind Evans in that attack and they made it clear that they dissociated themselves from the opinion which Ted Hill had expressed at the Conference, by issuing a public statement in the name of the General Council repudiating him. But when Mr. Tom O'Brien, the present chairman of the T.U.C.—without prior authority—sent a telegram of support to Winston Churchill in the name of the T.U.C. on his departure for America, the General Council did nothing about it in spite of the storm of protests from the rank and file of the unions. These two incidents alone indicate the gulf which separates the opinions of the rank and file of the unions and the General Council members of the T.U.C.

Within a few hours of the victory of the Tory Party at the last General Election the General Council of the T.U.C. issued a public pronouncement that they were ready to 'work amicably' with the new government. The Tory Government took the hint and lost no time in opening its attack upon the living standards of the workers by a policy of: increasing commodity prices, imposing additional burdens of taxation, by reintroducing charges under the Health Insurance Scheme, and by cuts in social service expenditure. When this provoked widespread protests from the workers and threats of strike action, the leaders of the T.U.C. hastened to denounce the idea of industrial action. Mr. Deakin—then Chairman of the T.U.C.—was particularly anxious that the trade union movement should not harass the government, and at a public meeting he declared *'now that we have got a Tory Government we have to make the best of that government'*. As the volume of demand for industrial action increased amongst the rank and file and the miners stopped Saturday working in protest against the 'Butler cuts' the General Council of the T.U.C. issued a joint statement with the Parliamentary Labour Party condemning industrial action against this attack by the Tory Chancellor of the Exchequer. The honest trade union desire of the workers to defend themselves against the Tory attacks was described as *'attempts now being made by irresponsible elements to persuade trade unions to take industrial action in order to achieve political ends'*.

The capitalist press gave prominent publicity to this official censure of the rank and file and praised the trade union and Labour Party leaders for their 'firm attitude to extremists', their 'exposure of communist intrigue', their 'resistance to a world conspiracy to undermine the industrial power of the nation', etc.—and all because

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the workers wanted to defend their living standards against the attacks made by their traditional class enemies, the Tories. One leading article in the Tory *Evening Standard*, after complimenting the trade union leaders on their restraint of the rank and file, ended with the following words, '*Sensible advice to the trade union movement from the platform must be backed by a similar restraint on the opposition front bench*'. The editor must now feel very satisfied to see how thoroughly his advice has been followed.

Whilst the General Council of the T.U.C. have been ready to denounce their own rank and file members for wanting to take militant action against the Tories, they have, either by pronouncement or silence, aided and abetted the Tories in carrying through a policy which has undermined the living standards of the workers, subjected us to American capitalist domination that has endangered our future as a nation, and threatened the peace of the world.

Many anti-socialist acts were committed by the Labour Government and the excuse for silence then was, 'it is our own Government and we should not embarrass them'. That excuse could have no validity since the last General Election. But the General Council have made no protest against the colossal arms programme of the Tory Government which is met at the expense of working-class standards through direct and indirect taxation unprecedented in the history of this country. They have issued no denouncement of American domination of our foreign policy; nor of American interference in British trade with China, U.S.S.R., and East European countries. They have made no declaration against the occupation of Britain by American armed forces and the use of British airfields as American atom-bomb bases. They have issued no protest against Anglo-American policy in Western Germany involving the rebuilding of German militarism and the release of the Nazi war criminals. But they rushed into print with a ban against the World Peace Congress in Vienna. They also issued a proclamation against the World Economic Conference in Moscow to which business men and trade union leaders were invited, to discuss practical steps for developing peaceful trading relationships between all countries. They have split the international trade union movement by breaking away from the World Federation of Trade Unions and they have split the London trade union movement by disaffiliating the historic London Trades Council and many local trades councils.

Do these actions represent a Socialist or a Tory policy? The answer is surely clear. If the trades union movement permits the General Council to continue that reactionary policy we must not

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be surprised at the personal defections and apostasy seen in the Steel Board appointments. Today, the dividing line between the policy of the leading members of the General Council and the leaders of the Tory Party is narrower than the dividing line of opinion between those T.U. leaders and the active rank and file trade unionists. To cross the line to the Tory camp is therefore an easy and logical step, especially as the monetary reward is substantial.

We might almost thank Winston Churchill for these appointments if they have the effect of focussing the attention of the general trade union movement upon the rottenness which has developed within the top leadership and, by that exposure, stimulated the rank and file to action to clear up the mess. All those who have a sincere regard for the future of the British trade union movement must now exert their influence to end the reactionary policy of the General Council and direct the movement on to a sound working-class course. We should then see the prospect of an early defeat of the Tory Government and the elimination of those who serve its interests.

THE ARTIST AND THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT

PAUL HOGARTH

TWO events, both in the past year, one in Mexico City and the other in San Francisco, prove only too well that the rulers of present-day America have a very clear understanding of the important contribution which progressive artists can make to the working-class and democratic movement. In Mexico City, the Government seized, mutilated, and removed to an unknown place Diego Rivera's unfinished mural on the struggle for peace. This transportable mural was painted in the National Palace of Fine Arts and was commissioned by Dr. Carlos Chavez, director of the Government National Institute of Fine Arts. Because the artist told the truth about Korea as well as portraying the forces of peace as against those of war, the painting was not included in the large and important exhibition of Mexican Art which was shown in London recently. In San Francisco, the Public Buildings Administration ordered the covering up of Anton Refregier's murals at the Rincon Post Office Annex, depicting the history of San Francisco, including the famous 1934 waterfront strike. As a result of a nation-wide competition Refregier was chosen by the United States Public Buildings Administration in 1941 to paint a series of murals, which

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he eventually began in 1946, after the war, and completed after two and a half years' work. Last month, a panel which depicted the Freedom of Education was attacked because the prevailing colour was red. The American Legion has called for its immediate removal.

These two acts of vandalism, by Governments acting under the direction of the big bankers of Wall Street, recall the Nazi burning of the books. They demonstrate that the present-day rulers of the capitalist world are so violently opposed to all progressive art that they would rather see it destroyed than left in existence as an inspiration to people struggling for peace, democracy, national independence and social advance. The attack on the murals of Rivera and Refregier should draw sharply to the attention of trade unionists and artists the need for closer unity and joint action in their common interests. Artists and the working class have a common enemy in imperialism. Artists can play a great part in assisting the struggle of the working class. The organised working class can play a great part in defending the best interests of artists. In feudal times the artist was a craftsman, whose job it was to supply the community with paintings and sculpture. With the rise of capitalism the artist increasingly felt himself to be an individual facing the public and no longer the craftsman serving the community as a whole. He found also, that he was, above all, the servant of the new merchant class and that his works became privately-owned objects of luxury, embellishing the palatial homes of the merchant princes.

At first the new relationship produced good results, for the artist was still in close contact with the people and played a prominent part in the life of the community. This was of course the case in early 15th century Florence. Many artists held important office and were in closest sympathy with the rising power of the merchants. Gradually this contact weakened. The artist began not only to be regarded as an individual different from other craftsmen, but more and more as an eccentric, as someone different from ordinary people. As capitalism developed, this isolation grew even greater. By the 19th century it had become an important factor in the attitude of artists themselves to society. Generally speaking, the artist had the choice of picking up the crumbs from those who felt it was fashionable and romantic to associate with the 'eccentric' or putting on a stiff shirt and top-hat to paint aristocrats and royalty in ermine, smiling industrialists and civic dignitaries trimmed with gold chain and velvet. He had the privilege of revolt and subsequent poverty or to prostitute his art in order to send the faces of the bourgeoisie to a doubtful posterity.

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Art of the People

"The Vengeance of the People" — *Leopoldo Mendez* (*b*

(From the exhibition of Mexican Art at the Tate Gallery, March–April, 1953)

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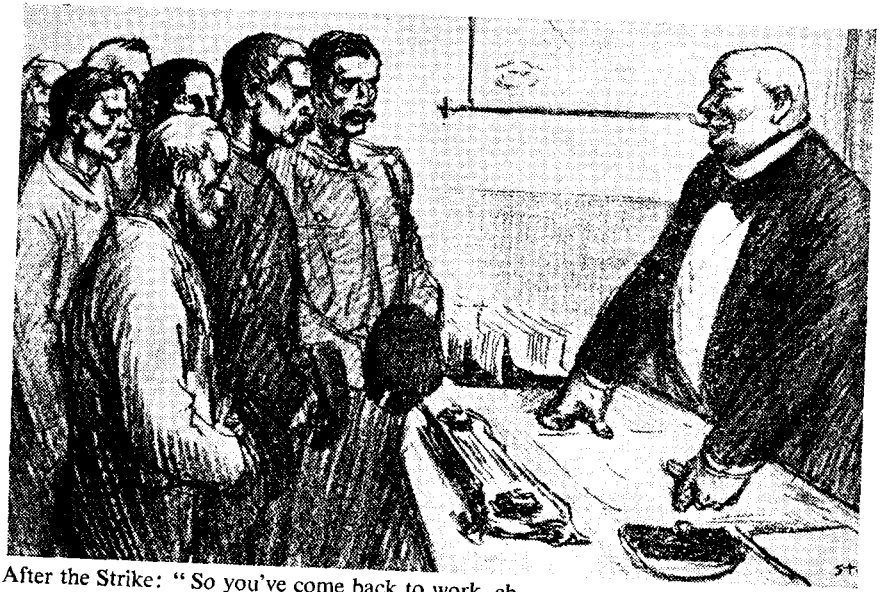
Solidarity (1931)

Käthe Kollwitz



After the Strike: "So you've come back to work, eh, you chaps who meant to starve me to death!"

Steinlen

(*From L'Assiette au Beurre*, 1901)

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The only artists of the 19th century who did not feel this isolation were those few who were of the people and kept contact with them. In the early half of the century the most important of these was Daumier; later came Courbet (who actively participated in the Paris Commune), the sculptors Dalou and Meunier, the graphic artists Steinlen and Kathe Kollwitz. These artists hated the injustices of the society in which they lived, but found support among the more advanced sections of the working-class movement and so were saved from the complete isolation which had overtaken the bourgeois artists.

By the end of the 19th century there had emerged a group of artists whose work reflected for the first time an association and sympathy with the political and economic aims of the industrial working class. This trend was most pronounced in Britain, France, Belgium, Russia and Germany where the development of capitalism and the working-class movement was at its highest. In those countries, these artists fell broadly into two categories—the painters and sculptors like Eugene Laermans, Repin, Ford Maddox-Brown, Munkacsy, Camille Pissarro, Meunier and Joseph Israels, who were compelled to live dual lives as 'respectable' artists, at the same time well aware of the necessity for an art based on the working people.

The second category was composed mainly of a group of graphic artists and caricaturists who in the pages of the early socialist and progressive press kept up a merciless fire of hard-hitting satirical drawings which savagely exposed social injustice and political corruption. There were many of these weeklies throughout Europe and America. Probably the most famous was *L'Assiette au Beurre* (The Butterdish), which was published in Paris from 1901 to 1912; and the American *The Masses*, founded in 1911. *L'Assiette au Beurre* carried no text, being made up entirely of cartoons and caricatures with short captions. The most outstanding contributors were Delannoy and Steinlen. The latter proved himself a true successor to Daumier in his sympathy and understanding of the common people. This was particularly expressed in *Tromp la Mort* in which he depicted the harrowing scene of the identification of the corpses of dead workers after a terrible explosion in a dynamite factory at Issy in 1901. Another of *L'Assiette's* contributors—Grandjouan, graphically describes his feelings at the scene of an appalling mining disaster at Courrieres in the Pas-de-Calais.

The Masses and its successor *New Masses* introduced the work of such internationally-known artists in the labour movement as Art Young, Robert Minor, Fred Ellis and William Gropper.

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An artist whose work had more permanent influence and significance was Kathe Kollwitz. Kathe Kollwitz, who died in 1945, fought reaction and injustice all her life. Her unrelenting opposition to Hitler resulted in her dismissal as a professor in the Berlin Academy of Fine Art and her work being banned from public exhibition. Between 1895 and 1898, she produced her cycle of prints, *The Weavers' Revolt*. This series, a most profoundly expressed drama of working-class life, was the result of some years spent in a weavers' settlement. In the years which followed the 1914-1918 war, her art reflected the grim social scene of a post-war Germany ravaged by mass unemployment and political disunity. Reacting to this, her drawings became more direct; she contributed to the Trade Union, Social-Democratic and Communist press. Her personal attitude towards working-class unity was dramatically depicted in the lithograph *Solidarity* in which Social Democrat and Communist workers link hands on the occasion of a demonstration of friendship with the Soviet Union.

Out of the bloody, tortured years that began in 1910 with the overthrow of Diaz and the Revolution, emerged the new artists of Mexico. During periods of civil war, they fought by the side of the workers and peasants; they organised and propagandised by word and by their art. When a reactionary régime returned to power, some went into exile. Later, under the progressive government of President Cardenas, artists like Alfaro Siqueiros, Diego Rivera and Jose Clemente Orozco, painted vast murals in public buildings and trade union centres, often for an unskilled worker's wage. The bitter struggle of a whole people towards a new life is implicit in the art of these years.

The Mexican graphic artists organised the *Taller de Graphica Popular*—(The Workshop of Popular Art). A co-operative enterprise without subsidies or members' contributions, this active and talented group of artists live on the proceeds of its art created for the Trade Unions, the Peasant organisations, the Peace movement and progressive political parties. The Workshop's graphic art includes picture text-books for the illiterate, posters and illustrated leaflets, anti-war posters, illustrations for cartoon-films; an endless series of satirical and commemorative prints and each year a People's Calendar. The T.G.P. is poor and its workshop cannot afford the refinements of modern methods of reproduction. The artists therefore use the cheapest and simplest technical processes; lino cuts, silk screen, wood cuts and lithography. Without this pictorial language the struggle in Latin America against disease,

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pestilence and superstition would be terribly handicapped and the introduction of knowledge unthinkable. Thus these artists turn their hands to everything that is demanded of them. The paintings of Siqueiros, Rivera and Orozco as well as a large selection of the T.G.P. prints, formed an impressive section of the exhibition of Mexican Art at the Tate Gallery. Rather than attempt judgement of the avowedly social realism of the best Mexican art of today, the critics of the capitalist press cheerfully ignored this whole section.

This art of a new Mexico had considerable influence in the United States. The slump of 1929 and the ensuing economic crisis dealt a severe blow to the artificial art of the preceding boom years. A new generation of artists, stirred by the general social and political awakening, sought a positive content and a leadership which would overcome the prevailing demoralisation. The new realism crystallised under a number of influences. In the artistic sense the most important of these was that of the Mexicans—Siqueiros, Orozco and Diego Rivera—all of whom carried out numerous mural projects in New York, Chicago and San Francisco.

At a later stage, the struggles which had set the artists moving, the struggles of the sharecroppers and dispossessed farmers, of industrial workers and unemployed, of evicted tenants and ex-servicemen continued, spurring the cultural movement to an even higher level. American social art entered its most mature period with the rise of three working-class artists, Ben Shahn, Joe Jones and William Gropper. How far the popular movement had advanced was indicated by the fact that although these artists developed out of activity on behalf of the working-class movement, museums and art galleries throughout the country felt compelled to purchase their work to maintain their standing.

An interesting echo of those years occurred in 1948 when the progressive artist Anton Refregier was completing the last of the P.W.A. mural schemes in San Francisco. These murals which portray the *real* history of California are on the walls of a huge new post office building. They were not to the taste of the Truman Administration at all, for they included such subjects as Tom Paine; the persecution of the Chinese community; Tom Mooney; the Great Maritime Strike; the struggle led by the Ship Caulkers' Union for the 8-hour day in 1865. The artist was ordered to delete all reference to labour struggles. This demand was followed by an order to remove a portrait of Roosevelt from a mural which depicted the first United Nations Conference. But the San Francisco C.I.O. Council, the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's

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Union and a committee of Californian artists united to save the murals. Picket lines were thrown around the post office building and a nation-wide campaign was organised. As a result the U.S. Government had to give way. This action is a striking example of the readiness of the labour movement to defend works of art which it believes to be of importance for the working class. It is to be hoped that the Californian labour movement will rally again to defend the murals against the threat of removal (because they are part of the wall surface, this will mean total destruction).

In Europe a group of artists have emerged in the post-war years as a new force in helping to create an art of the people. Prominent among these artists is the French painter Andre Fougeron whose most important work so far has been the series *Le Pays des Mines*. This group of paintings of the mining districts of Northern France were commissioned by the Miners' Union. Although these pictures constitute a grim chronicle of the mining communities of the Pas-de-Calais, they portray the courage and the optimism which characterises this heroic section of the working class. In 1951, the trade union movement of French North Africa invited the painters Mireille Mirahle and Boris Taslitsky to visit Tunis and Algeria to make a series of drawings and paintings of the life of the African workers and peasants.

Foremost among the artists of Italy beloved by the people are Gabriele Mucchi and Renato Guttuso. As with the majority of the present generation of Italian progressive artists, the war against Fascism was a vital factor in their development. Mucchi fought as a partisan. After the war he associated himself even more closely with the life and the activities of the workers and peasants. His exhibitions in factories and the themes of his work show how deep and profound is this association with the working class. His most outstanding pictures are probably *The Strike, The Defenders of the Factory* and the memorable *Death of Maria Margotti*. Mucchi played a leading part in the establishment of the Cooperativa Renascita—the Milan Artists' Co-operative. This workshop which works on a similar basis to the *Taller de Graphica Popular*, is composed of ex-partisan artists who in addition to creating paintings and murals for factory exhibitions and trade union centres, produce a huge amount of visual propaganda material for the Italian Trade Union movement.

I have given examples of the part the artist can play in the working-class movement. It may be useful to provide a few practical suggestions as to how this collaboration of the artist can be invalu-

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able to Trade Unionists. Works of art are only valid and permanent when they profoundly reflect the life of a given period of human history, and move us to an understanding of the part we can play. It is of special importance that the Trade Unions should encourage the artist to undertake paintings, sculpture and drawings which have as their subject-matter not only the struggles of the workers, but their place of work, their pleasures as well as their hopes. Visual propaganda material—the decoration of a conference hall, posters, cartoons, all play an invaluable part in the day to day work of a trade union. All this work is of the greatest importance and one does not reduce the value of its contribution by emphasising the need for a more consistent patronage of progressive artists with regard to murals, paintings and prints.

In Western Europe, particularly in Britain, a situation exists where the State has transferred its patronage of academic art to Abstract art, thus widening the gulf between our artists and the people. Patronage of the artist by the Trade Union movement would be most vital in bringing about a situation in which not only a New Realism would thrive but would win the best elements of the profession for the working-class movement as a whole. As the bourgeoisie won the finest of the artists of the Renaissance by commissioning portraiture instead of religious frescoes, the various trade unions could commission not only murals which give a pictorial meaning to their struggles for their members, but series of paintings and drawings, which could be travelled from factory to factory and exhibited at fêtes, Co-operative halls and trade union premises; drawings for the trade union and progressive press; popular prints which could be so priced as to encourage workers to buy them for their homes. The *Taller de Graphica Popular* and more recently a group of progressive British artists have shown how good colourful prints can be cheaply produced. How much more cheaply could they be sold if trade unions undertook their publication on a mass scale! The working-class movement must create its own art—an art of the people. It is doing so but the development is often uneven, with the artist not playing as effective a part as he might. If the artist is to be the pictorial conscience of mankind, he must thrive on an understanding of his abilities, an appreciation of the part he can play in the fight for peace and for socialism. It is therefore in the immediate and long-term interests of the working-class movement to ensure that artists play a full part in the struggle for the emancipation of all mankind.

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CALENDAR OF WAR OR PEACE

QUÆSTOR

IN country after country the peoples are redoubling their pressure for peace as they realise the immense opportunities which have been thrown open by the initiatives of the Soviet and Chinese Governments. Even among the ruling classes of such countries more sober-minded politicians are beginning to respond. In this country, in particular, even those who, until recently, were the chosen mouthpieces of American policy have been forced by events to begin changing their tune. But the high-handed warmongers in the United States, becoming desperate as their isolation grows, are straining every effort and stopping at no unscrupulous device to thwart, even at a late stage, what *The Times* Washington correspondent called (May 23) 'the momentum which, since Sir Winston Churchill's speech, is steadily leading the Powers to the conference table'.

Each of these features of the international situation may be briefly illustrated in calendar form.

May 19. Scandinavian Foreign Ministers support an early Great Power meeting.

May 22. At the Executive Committee of the League of Red Cross Societies (Geneva) China *moves*, U.S.A. *seconds*, a resolution advocating speedy settlement of the question of repatriation of prisoners of war, 'on a reasonable basis, in accordance with the principles of the Geneva Convention'.
U.S.S.R. *moves*, U.K. *seconds*, a resolution urging a ceasefire in Korea during armistice negotiations.

May 24. *Pravda* publishes a commentary on Churchill's speech of May 11, criticising its apparent commitment to a divided Germany and the suggestion of a new Locarno, but welcoming its proposal of an early Great Power meeting.

May 28. The U.S.S.R. abolishes the Soviet Control Commission in Germany and establishes a civilian High Commission.

June 6. The U.S.S.R. offers to exchange Ambassadors with Yugoslavia.

June 7. The Italian people inflict a heavy defeat on the American-sponsored De Gasperi government giving a big increase in votes to the parties demanding peace—the Communists and Socialists. 'The most deeply disappointed people in Rome at the moment seem to be the Americans' (*Manchester Guardian*, June 11). U.S.S.R. replaces a general by a civilian as its High Commissioner in Austria.

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June 8. Prisoner-of-war agreement signed at Panmunjom. The U.S.S.R. lifts zonal traffic controls in Austria.

June 9. Communiqué of Commonwealth Prime Ministers says they agree that 'no opportunity should be lost of composing or at least easing differences' with the Soviet Union. Subsequent comment makes quite clear that this is directed against the obdurate warmongers in the U.S.A., e.g., 'It is no small thing to have secured a common Commonwealth front on the big question of a meeting with Russia' (*The Times* editorial, June 11); and: 'The United States may have to modify its attitude to a Four-Power Conference as the result of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference' (Mohammad Ali, Pakistan Premier, in a television broadcast, June 13).

June 11. Leaders of Socialist Unity Party of Germany recommended certain modifications of policy to the government of the German Democratic Republic, in order to promote the national unity of the German people.

June 12. Allied Control Council in Austria agree for the first time on measures to supervise Nazi propaganda more closely.

It will be noticed that in this calendar, unlike that recorded in this magazine two months ago, some response from the West appears for the first time, the direct consequence of the first step taken by Churchill in his speech on May 11 proposing a four-power agreement. Nor is it pure chance that the disputes precipitated by this speech forced out into the open the American admission of a fact which the *Labour Monthly* has for years insisted upon—that Britain could have long ago asserted her independence of American domination, had her successive Labour and Tory rulers wished. It was 'absolutely essential' to the United States to have allies, General Ridgeway said to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (May 19): if she tried to act alone, whether in Korea or in Europe, she would 'invite inevitable national disaster'. There are signs that realisation of this important fact has begun to penetrate even the thickest Tory hides—not only in Britain but in the U.S.A. as well. Hence 24 hours later, President Eisenhower's proposal of an Anglo-French-American conference at Bermuda.

Hence also in reply to the persistent American attempts to lay down conditions for a Four-Power Conference:

May 19. 'It is foolish to make one particular negotiation a test or to demand one particular solution' (Selwyn Lloyd, Minister of State).

May 25, 26. *The Times, Telegraph* and *Herald* all repudiate any idea that the Bermuda Conference is intended to 'formulate preliminary demands' or to come to any agreement at the expense of the U.S.S.R.—so far as Churchill is concerned.

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May 28. *Telegraph* says it is 'rash to assume' that Russia has no intention of coming to terms.

June 5. *Telegraph* editorial reproves Dulles for his laying down of preliminary conditions, saying that the Four-Power Conference itself could 'pave the way for a *détente*', and make easier a 'piecemeal approach' to particular questions at issue.

Again, on a settlement in the Far East:

June 1. 'The chances of an armistice are being gravely imperilled by the rodomontades of American and South Korean extremists' (*The Times* Tokyo correspondent).

June 8 and 10. *Daily Herald* editorials demand the admission of China to the United Nations when a Korean armistice is concluded.

June 9. 'Nothing ought now to stand in the way of an armistice except the necessary administrative arrangements' (Churchill, in the House of Commons).

June 11. *Manchester Guardian* editorial warns the United States that the offer of a defensive alliance to Syngman Rhee means that he will attempt to 'unify' Korea by war.

And on the question of Germany:

June 8. *Manchester Guardian* editorial, replying to Adenauer's claims (to have the same sort of guarantee—and military alliance—in Europe that Syngman Rhee wants in Korea): 'Too much is at stake' to make them 'a reason for postponing or deciding against a Four-Power meeting'. The whole question of German re-armament might have to be 'reviewed'.

June 13. 'The chance of great changes in the European situation' has made the prospects of the so-called European Defence Community 'seem more and more remote'. The unification of Germany 'would be so fundamental a change in the state of Europe as to render obsolete measures designed for quite different conditions' (*Manchester Guardian*, editorial).

So marked has been the feeling in Great Britain that 'too much is at stake', indeed, that the *Observer* (May 17 and 31) has twice pressed for 'direct parallel contact' between the British and Soviet Governments, without waiting for Bermuda—a proposal taken up by the Archbishop of York in his diocesan letter (*The Times*, May 27). 'Exploratory conversations' for this purpose, he said, would carry 'the movement for peace a stage further': and though, of course, Anglo-Soviet conversations could not commit the U.S.A., it was not necessary to 'wait for the approval of other great states' before opening them. In other words, someone has even remembered that Britain has her independence to think of!

And for this very reason the calendar of the warmongers deserves particular attention—partly because it reveals what a gulf there is

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between their minds and those, even in the capitalist camp, who have begun to shrink back from the prospect of a third world war and ruin in the cause of Wall Street: partly because it shows how great is yet the need for redoubling efforts to propel the Government in the direction of peaceful negotiation, lest the wires pulled by the American war criminals prove too strong.

May 18. Ridgeway at the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee: 'There is a powerful Russian military machine and a demonstrated pattern of the will to use it'. Questioned, he instanced Korea, where 'though Russia's own military forces have not been employed, *their mere existence* contributed to the result'.

May 19. Eisenhower's broadcast: 'The military threat' from the U.S.S.R. remains unchanged.

May 21. A White House spokesman: 'The United States are not committed to talks with the U.S.S.R.' (this in reply to the French Premier who, in announcing the Bermuda Conference, said it would be preliminary to a Four-Power meeting).

May 22. Dulles at New Delhi: 'Before there could be hope of a successful meeting with the Russians', they *must* (i) end the war in Korea (ii) end the war in Indo-China (iii) sign an Austrian peace treaty. At the same time Dulles broke out into vulgar abuse of the Soviet leaders as an 'absolute dictatorship . . . not restrained by any moral principle'.

May 23. The London *Economist* editorial: no French statesman previously pursuing a 'European policy' could agree to unification of Germany by agreement with the Soviet Union. on the basis of a small German army and German neutrality, 'without personal dishonour'. France has only two choices—offered her by the *Economist*—either a 'tightly-knit European community' or a 'loosely-knit Atlantic community'.

May 26. *T.U.C. General Council* sternly announces that agreement on Austria is 'a test of the recent professions' of the U.S.S.R. (i.e., Transport House begins to lay down conditions just when the Tories have begun to give up the attempt!).

May 27. U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee votes 20-3 to end contributions to the United Nations if China is admitted.

May 28. Eisenhower tells his press conference that Bermuda 'will not necessarily lead to Four-Power talks'.

May 30. The London *Economist* rushes in to proclaim that the Soviet refusal of a Foreign Ministers Deputies' conference on Austria —laid down by Eisenhower as a *condition of agreement*—'has ruled out any imminent probability of a high-level conference with the Russians'. It sneers at 'the mirage of a meeting with Malenkov', and calls for attempt to 'bridge the gap between friends rather than foes'.

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General Gruenther, new Western Supreme C.-I.-C., says at Rome that 'Western civilisation is still threatened by serious dangers', and, that 'certain men thirst only after domination': the danger which overhangs the world 'continues to increase in volume and urgency'.

June 3. Eisenhower promises Republican leaders that U.S.A. will take the lead in opposing admission of China to United Nations: Senate votes 76-0 for such a policy.

June 9. Ridgeway (in his final report to the 'North Atlantic Treaty Organisation') says there is still danger of 'a full-scale Soviet attack within the near future'—and asserts that the U.S.S.R. has at least 4,200,000 men under arms (giving the lie to Omar Bradley, chairman of U.S. chiefs of staff, who in February gave the figure as $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions).

June 13. The *Economist* again: (i) complains that the Korean War is ending 'with neither a bang nor a whimper', (ii) says that Churchill is acting against 'his advisers', and that the 'bold initiatives *that public opinion seems to be expecting*' are dangerous, (iii) warns the Western allies against any 'chase for an agreement with Moscow over Germany'—at any rate until after Adenauer has held his elections.

Thus the enemies of peace are still active, especially in the U.S.A., but also among their satellites. They continue the criminal propaganda and intrigues for war. Moreover, to launch it they have their puppets, in West Germany and in South Korea, who have amply demonstrated that, given the least opportunity (like a 'defensive alliance'), they are ready to play the part of *agents provocateurs*. All in Britain who seek to restrain this country from further steps to regain its independence, particularly from direct conversations with the Soviet Union which would give hope of positive results even at Bermuda, are acting as British Syngman Rhees and Adenauers. But the successes already won in spite of them show that they can be defeated. Now is the time to multiply pressure on all M.P.s and on the Government to break the American bondage, re-establish close friendship with the U.S.S.R. as provided by the Anglo-Soviet Treaty of 1942 and turn the tide of world events towards peace.

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AN OPEN LETTER TO MY M.P.

ANDREW CONDRON
(Royal Marines)

To: Mr. R. Palme Dutt, Editor, Labour Monthly Magazine, 134, Ballards Lane, London, N.3.

CH/X 4710 Marine A. Condron, POW Camp, D.P.R.O.K., c/o The Chinese People's Committee for World Peace, Peking, China.

February 24, 1953.

Dear Sir,

In all probability this letter will come to you as a surprise, and it may be a source of amazement to you to discover that your very excellent magazine travels so far afield. But, believe me, the LABOUR MONTHLY *is only one of the extremely informative and educational magazines and books which are supplied to we 'prisoners' by our friends the Chinese Volunteers.*

I have a very deep personal interest in the LABOUR MONTHLY *as it was one of the first books which I read after my capture, and its guiding hand was a major factor in placing me on the road towards truth. The issue of September, 1950, to be exact.*

During the whole period of my captivity, I have had in my wallet a single, solitary 10/- note, and the number of imaginary 'pints' which this has purchased for me are too innumerable to mention. However, I wish to put that note to a much more useful purpose, and I enclose it as a contribution to the LABOUR MONTHLY *fund.*

Actually, my main purpose in writing to you is in order to have a covering note for the letter which I enclose (an Open Letter to my M.P.), in anticipation of publication in your magazine. It is my sincere wish that you will be able to find space for its reproduction, either in part or in whole, as it gives some reflection of the feelings of we POWs here in Korea. Failing this, however, could you please forward it to the Daily Worker?

Keep up your good work, our goal is in sight!

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Andrew M. Condron.

To: Mr. George Mathers, M.P., House of Commons, Westminster, London, England.

February 24, 1953.

Dear Sir,

As a native of Bathgate, West Lothian, and a member of the constituency which you represent in Parliament I wish to take this opportunity of expressing my views with regard to the present

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hostilities in Korea and to call upon you to add your support to the ever-widening sections of the British public who are in favour of bringing this war to a peaceful conclusion.

When this Korean war broke out on June 25, 1950, my opinion, like that of the great majority of the people in Britain, was in complete accord with the official explanation and I considered the outbreak as a simple case of North Korean aggression. 'Red Imperialism' was on the move! And it was in this state of mind that I left England for Korea, as a member of the 41st Independent Commando, Royal Marines, and took part in this war as an active combatant until my capture by the Chinese People's Volunteers on November 30, 1950.

Since that time I have been in a position whereby I have been able to devote much time for an objective consideration of all the pertinent facts related to the Korean question and this has resulted in the forming of my present conclusion, which I shall partly relate below.

The writer then quotes from United States sources which expose the State Department's fable of a 'surprise attack' from the North, and comments:

Surely, if the outbreak of the war had been a straight case of North Korean aggression, and if the United States Government policy had been fair and above board, there was no need for all this shilly-shallying and public deception.

Was the British public aware of the fact that the elections held in South Korea on May 30, 1950, had not been in Syngman Rhee's favour? Ninety per cent. of the electors voted and only twenty-seven of the old Assembly which Rhee had dominated, were re-elected. At least one hundred and twenty-eight of the two hundred and ten seats were won by independents, and Rhee supporters were sure of only forty-five seats. If the war had not broken out, it was well within the limits of possibility that Rhee could shortly have been forced out of office.

Another enigma—'It did not become public knowledge until June 5, 1951, during a routine hearing by the Senate Appropriations Committee on the State Department budget, that the State Department had already drafted a resolution to be used at the United Nations in the event of an attack in Korea.' Witness was John D. Hickerson, Assistant Secretary of State for U.N. Affairs. (*Hidden*

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History of the Korean War, I. F. Stone, p. 53). Why all the secrecy? Think of the propaganda value for the capitalist press if it could have told its readers of the 'aggressive intentions' of the Communists in Korea! I can just visualise the red ink headlines in the Daily Express! But why the ominous silence?

The whole legal structure of the United Nations participation in the Korean War rests, in my opinion, on very shaky foundations indeed, when one is acquainted with the fact that President Truman imposed military sanctions when he 'ordered United States air and sea forces to give the Korean government troops cover and support' at noon on the same day that the Security Council was to meet at 3.15 p.m., to discuss the question. The Security Council was thus forced to vote these sanctions or else oppose the action taken by the United States—a step which was exceedingly difficult to take by countries dependent economically on the United States. This was later reflected in the statement, 'The Senate . . . warned the sixteen beneficiary nations that those refusing to help the United States fight the United Nations' battle in Korea might lose all Marshall Aid.' (*New York Times*, August 1, 1950). The *fait accompli* is, I believe, a measure often adopted by certain diplomatic circles!

I must apologise for this rather lengthy explanation and the frequent quotes, but I feel that they are necessary in order to show, in part, my feelings on this question which requires cool, calm and objective analysis by anyone who has the interests of the British people at heart. The above mentioned facts are only a few of those which are available, upon inquiry, to every responsible person in Britain, but it is my belief that these facts have been deliberately withheld from large sections of the public—otherwise the people of Britain would long ago have brought pressure to bear which, no doubt, could have ended this war.

I am convinced that Members of Parliament, as public servants, should check and verify all such facts and then put them at the disposal of their constituents, thus enabling them to weigh and consider all pertinent factors and reach their own conclusions. That, if my memory serves me correctly, is one of the fundamentals of democracy.

My own personal idea, subject to better judgement, of the duties of a Member of Parliament, is that he should unreservedly serve the interests of those whom he represents, regardless of his own subjective desires. But if this is any criterion of the actions of Members

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of Parliament, then there are many, to judge by Hansard, who are guilty of 'non-representation' insofar as the Korean War is concerned. When I stop to think of the needless deaths of so many young men here in Korea, such politicians make me sick!

Also I wish to register my disgust and apprehension of the reported statements contained in certain British and American newspapers to the effect that officers and men in these prison camps are being beaten and machine-gunned unmercifully. In actual fact, the only danger to our lives comes from our own aircraft which, in the past, have on more than one occasion strafed and bombed these clearly marked camps. The aim of such mendacious reports in these papers cannot but be directed towards confusing the mind of the public and disrupting the chances of a peaceful settlement of this war. I consider all possible refutation of these slanders as of paramount importance.

I trust that I, and the other members of your constituency, can count upon you to make our voices heard in Parliament and that you will do everything in your power to bring this useless war to a speedy conclusion.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) ANDREW M. CONDRON.

Home Address: 90, Stuart Terrace, Bathgate, West Lothian, Scotland.

FROM THE *LABOUR MONTHLY* OF 25 YEARS AGO

BOMBAY TEXTILE STRIKE

The general strike of the Bombay textile operatives, including about 150,000 workers, resulted from the gradual accumulation of grievances with regard to wage reductions and working conditions, to remedy which no efforts were being made by the leaders of the official Bombay Textile Union and the All-India Trade Union Congress. That it was no flash-in-the-pan or sudden response to irresponsible agitators is evident from the stubborn and united struggle of all the workers, which has already been in process for over two months.

(From *The World of Labour: India*, July, 1928.)

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McCARTHYISM IN BRITAIN?

CHRISTOPHER MEREDITH

THE McCarthy witch-hunt, which is now being directed specifically at American school and university teachers, has been generally condemned in Britain. Even before the full attack is launched, a correspondent in the *Economist* (21/3/53) points out that in the U.S.A.:

> The great majority of university administrations have already accepted the prevailing congressional view that membership in the Communist party is, by itself and without reference to the actual teaching of a professor, sufficient grounds for loss of a teaching job. . . . The damage has long since been done. It is to be measured, if such measurements are possible, in terms of opinions left unexpressed out of timidity, letters to the editor left unposted, lectures toned down for respectability's sake, memberships in liberal organisations abandoned. It is shown in an ever increasing tendency to look before one leaps—and then, perhaps, not to leap at all.

But condemnation of the 'American way' by university leaders and the Press becomes ineffective and even hypocritical when they allow to pass unchallenged the beginnings in Britain of attacks on intellectual freedom which differ only in degree from McCarthyism.

On May 12, 1953, a new stage was reached in the three-year battle to obtain a full, official and independent enquiry into the ending of Andrew Rothstein's appointment as Lecturer in Soviet Institutions at the University of London School of Slavonic Studies. The right had been won to present to Convocation (the representative body of graduates of the University) a clear statement of the facts of the case, so far as they are known, and of the grounds for suspecting political discrimination. The result was a decisive vote (128-60) requesting an enquiry, and the matter now goes to the University Senate for decision.

Scarcely a ripple of interest was aroused when Sir Walter Moberly in *The Crisis in the University* (1947) advocated the non-appointment, and if necessary the dismissal, of teachers, however excellent their technical qualifications, whose 'world outlook' conflicted with his ideal 'Christian University'. Yet Sir Walter was then the Chairman of the University Grants Committee, which currently distributes about two-thirds of the total income of the British universities, and who is to say how many of those concerned with appointments may not have taken the hint? Almost at the same time the head

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of a College in the University of London is known to have declared that 'he would not be a party to the further infiltration of Communists into the teaching staff of the University': and in fact a distinguished Marxist scholar (the only really possible candidate) was rejected for the post then under discussion, and it was left vacant. *

In 1950 the Middlesex County Council adopted a political test for head teachers, principals, and lecturers in training colleges, and refused to confirm the appointment of a Communist teacher. The way in which this sort of thing can spread was well described in a letter in the *New Statesman and Nation* (13/5/50) from a group of Cambridge and Oxford dons headed by Professor J. H. C. Whitehead and Mrs. Joan Robinson, both non-Communists:

> We have good reason to believe that during the last two or three years political tests have been unofficially applied with increasing frequency in the making of appointments to University teaching posts. In a number of cases known to us, candidates have been asked by members of interviewing boards whether or not they are members of the Communist Party. Whatever the reply given by the candidate, prejudice on a matter irrelevant to the appointment is induced. Such prejudice may well result in the appointment of a candidate other than the one best qualified for the post. In other cases, academic referees have been known to write glowing testimonials as to the candidate's qualifications, with a rider stating that he is a Communist.

Discrimination is made easier by the system of appointment by a small committee, whose discussions are confidential. In the Rothstein case, the facts considered and views expressed at two meetings of the General Purposes Committee (November 28 and December 14, 1949), in a discussion lasting several hours, were never revealed even to the Council of the School, which actually took responsibility for the decision on an issue of confidence in the G.P.C. The demand for a full enquiry to elicit the facts thus becomes of first importance.

The allegation that Communists (and by implication a much wider section who hold progressive views) are by their very nature unfitted for teaching and other posts requiring the sifting and objective presentation of facts has recently been taken up by *The Times Literary Supplement* (see article by Andrew Rothstein in *The Modern Quarterly*, Spring 1953). The arguments about 'an ideology alien to Western civilisation' and 'closed minds which subordinate facts to dogma' are, as usual, advanced impersonally, for

* As, in effect, Rothstein's post was abolished after his dismissal—perhaps for want of a teacher with the necessary qualifications.

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the very good reason that they are shown to be untenable by a mere glance at the record of the Marxist teachers, historians and scientists who have won prestige among their colleagues precisely because of the intellectual and academic qualities they are supposed to lack. Indeed, it is mainly this prestige which makes such people a danger to the witch-hunters and a target for their attacks.

The introduction of political tests for teachers, civil servants and other sections of workers is closely bound up with the development of the 'cold war' since 1945. The School of Slavonic Studies is especially open to such influences. Between the wars its orientation was notoriously anti-Soviet and on a very small scale. The official Scarbrough Report on teaching of Oriental and Slavonic languages (1947) explained that during this period 'political conditions were unfavourable to the spread of accurate knowledge about the Soviet Union', whereas the war 'resulted in a thirst for knowledge of the people of the Soviet Union'. This thirst was the basis for the very rapid post-war (1946-7) expansion of the School, which included Rothstein's lectureship. But the appointment in 1947 of a Director who had first served for four years in the British Embassy in Moscow might reasonably have been interpreted as a move in the 'cold war'. As the *New Statesman and Nation* commented (24/6/50) in summing up the discussion in its columns started by the letter quoted earlier:

> The Foreign Office and other official bodies may conceivably view the School of Slavonic Studies less as a cloister for objective research than as a training school both for political warfare specialists and potential Intelligence agents.

When in 1950 the Council of the School decided not to reappoint Rothstein, because of his 'inadequate scholarship', it was obviously not because his work had been unsatisfactory or because teaching in his subject was being ended, or because a better qualified candidate was available. There was consequently immediate suspicion that the decision was being taken on political grounds, especially as Rothstein was the only Communist in a staff of more than 20. The authorities have, of course, been extremely reticent, but constant pressure has obtained a certain amount of evidence, which only strengthens the suspicion. The following points may be noted:

1. It has been stated that the *only* evidence on 'scholarship' considered by the G.P.C. was reviews of two books published by Rothstein; the only really hostile reviews, however, were those pubished in the School's own journal just when re-appointment was being considered.

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2. Several months *after* the School's decision, Rothstein was re-appointed by the University Senate for the fourth successive year as Examiner for Honours students in his subjects.

3. The authorities repeatedly emphasised, to Rothstein himself and to various deputations, that there was no reflection on his work and that his politics had not even been discussed; yet in 1951, 18 months after the event, the University officially stated:

> The purpose of an appointment for a limited period was to see whether Mr. Rothstein, who was known to be a member of the Communist Party at the time of his appointment and who had worked as a journalist for the Tass Agency for over 20 years, could treat his subject with that degree of scholarly detachment and impartiality which is implicit in the academic approach and essential in the university teacher. The Governors of the School reluctantly came to the conclusion that he did not achieve this standard.

4. This statement is in direct conflict with the Inspectors' Report of the University Visitation to the School in 1949, which, only a few months before, had discussed this very point and stated:

> We should like it to be clearly understood that we have no reason to think that students are at present submitted to political propaganda and we heard no complaints on that score.

5. The staff and students who had been working with Rothstein stated very forcefully that his departure would be a great loss to the School, and appeared to have little doubt that it was due to political rather than to academic considerations.

6. The University authorities tried desperately to prevent any discussion of the affair in Convocation, even going to the length of denying that it was 'a matter relating to the University'. Only when these arguments had been rejected by a Committee of the Privy Council was the debate of May 12 permitted.

7. No attempt has been made from the official side to counter the evidence presented, except by irrelevant arguments, delaying tactics, and personal attacks upon those supporting the demand for an enquiry.

The history of the affair shows clearly the need to expose vigorously the threats to academic freedom, to abandon wishful thinking ('it can't happen here' was once a popular saying in America, too), and to rely instead upon the mobilisation of a wide section of opinion. The attitude 'an attack on one is an attack on all' is just as necessary for teachers and professional workers as it is in the factory, and the whole movement should be vitally concerned to maintain and extend freedom of thought and expression in our educational institutions. There is every reason to suppose that universities are at least as sensitive as other employers to the pressure of public opinion on this issue.

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Book Reviews

AFRICA

Who Killed Kenya? by Colin Wills. (112 pp. Dennis Dobson. *9s. 6d.*) *Gold Coast Revolution,* by George Padmore. (272 pp. Dennis Dobson. *12s. 6d.*); *Children in the British Colonies,* (22 pp. National Committee for the Defence of Children. *6d.*)

IN the year 1895, British engineers with the help of imported Indian labour started to build a railway from Mombasa across the deserts and mountains to the shores of Lake Victoria, 800 miles away in the interior of Africa. The line was built, not so much as to provide communications for the territory which was later to be known as Kenya, but to enable men and supplies to be carried from the Indian Ocean to the Uganda Protectorate which lay beyond. The line passed over the high plateaux which lie in the shadow of Mount Kenya, where is to be found some of the most fertile soil and most agreeable climate in all Africa. These highlands were found at the time to be practically uninhabited. The emptiness was due to the fact that in the 1880's plague and famine had seriously reduced the numbers of the tribes which were in occupation of the land. In some parts the Kikuyu farmers had been driven into the surrounding forests by the marauding Masai. In any case methods of cultivation and pasturing favoured by the African people made it necessary to keep large areas of fallow. Among the Kikuyu the practice of placing aside land for future occupation by young married couples was an additional factor in keeping the highlands largely unoccupied at the time of the arrival of the British.

In his book, *Who Killed Kenya?* Mr. Colin Wills exculpates both the Government and the settlers who, he claims, acted in good faith in taking over the empty highlands. However, of the fact that the Government over a period of some 40 years progressively ejected Africans who were actually cultivating parts of the highlands so that by 1939 there was not one left, there is not a word.

Mr. Wills says that there grew a patriarchal relationship between the white settlers and the African people 'in the peaceful days of Kenya'. During this period an enlightened British imperialism had transformed a territory which was 'just a part of Africa' into 'a country with a future'. 'Who is to blame for the unhappy outcome, the death of the Kenya which was a vision as luminous as the hills?' asks Mr. Wills. He supplies his version of the answer. The killers are, on the one hand, some settlers who, having grown used to the patriarchal life of the farms, resist the claim of the Africans to share in government; and on the other, African nationalists, dazzled by 'the blaze of African glory from the West'. Mr. Wills' book is no guide to the real situation in Kenya.

Mr. George Padmore also appears to be dazzled by this West African 'glory'. In his book, *The Gold Coast Revolution,* he claims that the Gold Coast has advanced to the very threshold of Dominion status as a result of a bloodless revolution carried out under the leadership of the Convention People's Party. He treats the development of the Gold Coast nationalism and the concomitant constitutional changes in complete isolation from what was happening in the meantime in the rest of the world. No one reading this book would suspect that imperialism entered a crisis at the

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beginning of the present century, and that the intensification of this crisis as a result of the Great October Revolution and then by the defeat of Fascism in the second world war, has been a major factor in determining imperialist policies and actions in Africa.

The future of every country is its children. This applies as much to subject Colonial territories as to sovereign, independent countries. Even a brief study of the conditions of life of children in the British Colonial territories shows that the future of these territories can only be grim and doleful under imperialism. A new pamphlet, *Children in the British Colonies,* published by the National Committee for the Defence of Children, gives a truly terrible account of the sort of existence imposed on the children of two of Britain's most important and most representative colonies, Nigeria and Malaya. The children of these two territories are, indeed, fortunate if they survive beyond the age of five years. Low wages of the workers and deplorable housing conditions mean that from birth the children are faced with problems which deny them a fair start. Indeed, they are born into a world of trouble. They are weakened even before birth because the mothers are ill-nourished. And after birth the children by their presence intensify the conditions of perpetual malnutrition from which the whole family suffers. Thus enfeebled the vast number of children in the Colonies have to endure the attacks of a large number of diseases bred by the very conditions in which they are trying to maintain their existence. They are exposed to the ravages of hookworm, guinea worm, bilharzia, and other blood-sucking parasites because their country itself is exposed to the no-less debilitating attentions of parasitic foreign imperialism which sucks up its resources equally avidly and mercilessly. Even if they survive the first five years their lives continue to be dominated by want. Lack of educational facilities mean that many children have to work before they reach adolescence. The crushing poverty of their parents in any case makes this almost inevitable.

The slaughter of the innocents of the Colonies is perhaps the most terrible crime of the imperialists. It is the more heinous because it is so easily concealed. The National Committee for the Defence of Children has performed a human service by publishing the facts contained in this pamphlet.

DESMOND BUCKLE.

THE EARLY DAYS

Solo Trumpet, by T. A. Jackson. (166 pp. Lawrence & Wishart. *12s. 6d.*)

THE theme of the Solo, 'Some memories of socialist agitation and propaganda', will be enjoyed by its readers no less than it has been by the T r u m p e t e r — incomparable Tommy Jackson. He describes it as 'a bundle of oddments fished up from the memory of one who has passed his allotted span' and aims to prove 'that a man can be a Communist and still remain human', although Marx and Engels had verified that long ere the Trumpeter arrived upon the scene. The 'overture' describes a journey in London during the blitz to the scene of T.A.'s apprenticeship as a compositor and is nostalgic, informative and highly entertaining. 'First impacts' describes his start at 13½ to learn his trade and gives the finest description

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of the 'composing room of a print factory' and its then inmates that anyone could wish for, but its most striking feature in those days was a lurid poster 'Vote for Lansbury and Socialism'. From the print shop we are taken with this shade of the apprentice boy to the streets, lanes and byeways of the London of Romance and see it through the eyes of one who had 'glasses supplied by magicians Charles Dickens, Walter Scott, Thackeray, Addison, Defoe, Fielding, Smollett, Sam Johnson and Will Shakespeare himself', all of whom Tommy knew well before he was fifteen. Lucky boy.

Now the 'Book addict' takes over and we marvel as we read the literary excursions which made of this enquiring boy the Jackson to which so many are indebted for his readiness to share his wealth of erudition. To travel to Booksellers Row with T.A. even in retrospect is a thrilling experience. Short-sighted he may have been but there was little that he missed. Here he indulged his passion for history and poetry and did not neglect the theatre. He becomes 'obsessed' with poetry 'until I became insensible to poetry'. By then his reading 'got to be the merely habitual routine of an addict' from which he was happily if not completely rescued by George Henry Lewes, then his deliverer, but only 'the bridge that carried one over' to the study of philosophy in 'Bacon, Hobbes, Locke and better still the mighty god - intoxicated master-atheist Spinoza. Thereafter Hegel and ultimately and in consequence, Marx'.

'Tis true as T.A. observes, 'Many men have secured degrees at Universities by devouring and assimilating a much smaller quantity of printed pages at a far less cost in labour and effort that I gave to my studies during these years of nonage'. All this time he was 'learning' his trade and his tales of 'devilry' in the shop are true to the best traditions of boisterous apprentices. Came manhood; the struggle for jobs, victimisation and poverty. Final disillusionment came with the Boer War, that 'plunder raid in which the honour of England and the lives of British soldiers were prostituted to the base ends of the speculators in gold and diamond mines'. He learned to his horror and disgust how easily and completely the mass of people can be stampeded into accepting the abrogation of 'Truth, decency, reason, and common sense' when the King goes forth to war.

In the chapter 'Misty Morning' Tommy's propaganda career began. He shows the trials of the budding socialist evangelist and the triumphs of the accomplished orator, introduces us to the humble and the great of the budding socialist movement, to the internal and eternal discussions, squabbles and personal rivalries that seem inseparable from growing pains. 'Driven to the North' Tommy became probably the best educated, most profound, and yet the most humorous and attractive of public speakers and as a class tutor in the early days of independent working-class education was a guide to many thousands of workers in the North. In Leeds as the book shows, he became an institution almost. The tale of his trials on the stump and in the police courts are instructive. In the first world war he fought against military service Acts and the whole horror of war for profit. He argued his own case so well as to get exemption on the grounds of his work of national importance.

Came 1917 and the rebirth of revolutionary socialism. Tommy

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with the S.L.P. contingent came to the Communist Party where long may he continue as speaker, author and to many a boon companion whose wit never fails. No review of mine could do more than introduce you to this horn of plenty in which T.A.'s sermon in a Methodist church on 'Isaiah the Bolshevik' is worth the price of the book.

BOB STEWART.

AMERICANS AND THE SPANISH WAR

The Volunteers by Steve Nelson. (192 pp. Masses & Mainstream, New York; Collets, London. *8s.*)

THE recent campaign in Britain around Lopez Raimundo and other political prisoners involved in Franco's savage courts martial has shown how deep-seated and enduring is British Labour and trade union feeling for the Spanish republic. Nevertheless, a generation has grown up to whom the Spanish War and the International Brigades are vague matters of history. Nelson's book goes goes a long way towards clothing that history in flesh and blood.

Of course it isn't the whole story. Steven concentrates on what he knew best—the Lincoln Battalion, its hopes, fears, exploits and mistakes. But it is not one-sided, no Hollywood epic with the Yanks hogging others' glory, but universal. Almost any event described could be paralleled in the British or other battalions. Anyone who fought at Brunete could cap the moving account of the death of Oliver, the negro comrade from whom Steve took over command of the Lincolns.

Whenever the British are mentioned, it is always in the highest terms, including a glowing eulogy of Major Nathan, of whose untimely death Steve was a witness.

Yes, this book is certainly history. You get the political background of the American lads, the motives that brought them to Spain. They saw the struggle there a continuation of the union battles, the strikes, the anti-fascist struggles back home, and when Republican Spain temporarily went down, they resumed their activities on the home front. That is how this book came to be published with its author in the County Prison at Pittsburgh with a 20 years' sentence for possessing books the U.S. authorities disapprove of — a life-sentence to a man of 50.

Of course there were 'curate's eggs' in the Lincolns, and some downright bad eggs, 'men who had come, not out of any strong political conviction, not quite adventurers, but not true anti-fascist fighters, either. . . . Some of them were honest men who gave good value, and some of them were traitors, and their treason cost good lives before it was discovered and proved'.

Steve doesn't gloss over that fact, but he does show the painstaking care and help given to 'demoralised elements' to win back their self-confidence. Steve's success in handling his men comes out in his explanation of political issues—his lucid justification of the tentative moves by the Republican government towards what we should now call 'People's Democracy'; his characterisation of the well-meant but irresponsible role of the Anarchists; and his forthright exposure of the 'leftist' elements whose prating about 'winning the war and losing the revolution' led to the attempted Barcelona putsch of May, 1937.

Some of the background stories which led the lads to volunteer for

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service in Spain are a class-education in themselves. Take the story of the scientist, Cookson, who, asked how he came to join the movement, chuckled and said:

> I reasoned it out. Actually it was a problem in physics led me into it. . . . I couldn't find the answer. I dug around, read everything I could find. In one of the volumes I came across a reference in the bibliography to V. I. Lenin: *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. . . . Reading that book was the shock of my life. Lenin had indicated an approach to find the answer to the question which puzzled me. He did what the greatest physicists didn't do. . . . Once I realised that there was only one course open to me.

One mild criticism is that the printer or someone has taken a fiendish delight in mis-spelling Spanish names, and this should be put right before the printing of a second edition.

ERIC EDNEY,
(Editor, *Spain Today*).

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HONOUR

to the martyrs of the American working-class movement

JOE HILL
November 19, 1915

SACCO AND VANZETTI
August 23, 1927

ETHEL and JULIUS ROSENBERG
June 19, 1953

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THE JAMBOREE

From South Africa an old friend describes bans and 'government by proclamation' and comments: 'Despite all the roars about democracy in the press, we are now, as you must know, living in a Fascist country'. It may be convenient for some to forget that in the orgy of Coronation celebrations; but, as a North country reader points out: 'The Coronation jamboree has not stifled the deep desire of the British people for peace. Every trade union conference since has gone on record for a peaceful solution of the world's problems. But powerful forces in America and here, and their stooges, still continue their plot for war. The only way to stop them is to put them in a straight-jacket—and don't ever let them loose.' Till then it goes on and on, while the crushing burden of armaments and 'Empire commitments' forces up the cost of living and money for the necessities of life becomes ever harder to find. A County Durham subscriber writes: 'Sorry I am rather later with my sub. this year. It's sometimes hard for an old miner of 68 to manage. Nevertheless I've made it. It gives one a new interest in life. Best wishes to you all'. And best wishes from us here, and particularly to all who have been keeping us so busy since the June number came out ('No use trying to pick out the best article in it', says a Kent reader. 'They are *all* best.') Especially to those who have been so busy using the Free Specimen Copy scheme from the back cover to build circulation. A point for the most active: don't just take it for granted others in your branch of the trade union and labour movement read *L.M.*: make sure of it. And what about those temporarily overseas, and out of reach of a public library?

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